

Best Practices for Lead Screening

1. Screen once a year according to *Rhode Island Department of Health's Lead Screening and Referral Guidelines* at 1, 2 & 3 years of age.
2. Use the Risk Assessment Questionnaire found on the Guidelines to assess the potential for lead exposure and to determine high-risk status. To facilitate this, provide the *Risk Assessment Questionnaire for Lead Screening* form (available in English, Spanish and Portuguese by calling 1-800-942-7434) to parents with children 37-71 months of age. The parent can fill out the form while in your waiting room.
3. Non-compliance or follow-through by parents to have lead screening performed following a visit is often a barrier to screening in practices where there is not immediate access to a laboratory or phlebotomist. To ensure screening is completed, encourage parent to have child tested immediately after visit.
4. Refer families who are non-compliant or lost to follow-up to the Family Outreach Program at 1-800-348-6417.
5. Check child's record for laboratory report of screening at all subsequent visits to ensure that previously ordered lead screenings have been completed. Use sick and well-child visits as opportunities to re-order or further encourage parents to have children tested for lead (i.e., order lead tests and CBC's at the same time).
6. Establish an internal protocol to follow up on lead screenings. Assign one person in your staff to be responsible for developing and implementing such protocol.
7. Consider developing a "Standing Orders for Lead Screening Protocol " with a nearby lab. Include a lead test reminder with lab name and address on your appointment confirmation/reminder cards.
8. Consider performing fingerstick screenings in your practice. Staff trainings and all necessary equipment needed are available through HEALTH by calling 222-5921.
9. Become a KIDSNET provider. If you are already linked to KIDSNET, the Lead Program can assist your office in conducting a Quality Assurance Review to assess lead screening in your practice, and will further make recommendations. If you are not linked to KIDSNET yet, contact Sue Duggan-Ball at 222-1580 to learn more about it and establish a priority for your connection to KIDSNET.
10. Practices with access to KIDSNET web application can run reports on children who are in need of lead screening. Reports can be run by age or date of birth, or a report can be run on all unscreened children in the practice. For questions or help with running report, contact your KIDSNET provider representative.

Recommendations for "Best Practices" have been compiled by using suggestions and actual practices currently being used by health care providers in RI to ensure all children are screened for lead. Special thanks to Dr. Richard Smith, Dr. Paul Wehbe and Dr. Stephanie Penchuk and all their wonderful staff for allowing us to share some of their "Best Practices" with others. The Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program offers technical assistance with implementation of "Best Practices" for interested health care providers. If you are interested please contact Patricia Raymond, RN at 222-5921.